GEN

ALLEN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

3 1833 02324 191 9

Gc 974.902 V75m

MEMORIAL ADDRESSES ON THE
LIFE AND CHARACTER OF JOHN..

MEMORIAL ADDRESSES

ON THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

JOHN S. SHEPARD,

DELIVERED AT THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

OF THE

Vineland Historical and . . .

. . . Antiquarian Society,

FEBRUARY 8, 1899.

VINELAND, NEW JERSEY

1900.

Vineland Printing House

MEMORIAL ADDRESSES

ON THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

JOHN S. SHEPARD,

DELIVERED AT THE REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

OF THE

Vineland Historical and . . . . . Antiquarian Society,

FEBRUARY 8, 1899.

VINELAND, NEW JERSEY

1900

Vineland Printing House

Allen County Public Library
900 Webster Street
PO Box 2270
Fort Wayne, IN 46801-2270

John Starling Shepard

Born, Sharon, Vermont, February 4, 1810

Died, Vineland, New Jersey, January 21, 1899

Address of the President, Daniel F. Morrill.

Your President and Secretary felt that the Trustees of this Society would approve their action in having the lecture day of this month devoted to a Memorial Service and Societary Conference regardful of the work and character of JOHN S. SHEPARD.

Mr. Shepard's contributions of money at a moment which seemed a crisis for the existence of this Society justify many renewals of gratitude; and the promptness and cheerfulness with which his gifts were always accompanied should excite fresh appreciation of his practical goodness. As his beneficiary for a stable and universal method of literary and educational welfare of Vineland may we not congratulate ourselves that this institution built up and rendered habitable by Mr. Shepard's munificence, became to him during his failing days, a pleasant resort for rest and quiet converse with friends and visitors. His calm satisfaction and enjoyment as he walked through this Hall, already dedicated by his name, or viewed the books on the filling up shelves were a manifest compensation for the offerings of his purse; and of a prophetic echo to the aspiration of his mind. For it was by the contemplation of the fields of thought, of investigation, of criticism, of argument and debate, of errors detected and checked, of truths discovered and enthroned; all of which these books represented, in which he delighted. It was by books embracing many subjects treated freely and astutely that he looked for deliverance from the bands and bonds of superstition. It was by means of alcoves and cabinets of books that he looked for the redemption and elevation of his fellow men. The

Library stood to him as the supreme agent of progress; and the roots and fruits of this intellectual tree for him must be unobstructed and free. Freedom in thinking, freedom in speaking, in writing and printing, was his urgency, his contention, [and may I not ask, is it not a free Press that has brought us to the consideration and knowledge of many worlds both internal and external which otherwise would have been left to the crudities and credulities of the vaguest dreams].

It is this spirit and example of free enquiry into all of our mental researches which he has bequeathed to this Society. The acceptance of the legacy implies and compels the duty on our part to respect and perpetuate these characters, and may I not truly say—so far in its career this Society has shown unqualified liberal mindedness in its choice of Trustees, and has exhibited a most generous hospitality towards all shades of belief, to all varieties of opinion, to every degree and quality of literary taste. Let us not depart from this standard of good already set up, or narrow the criterion of acceptability adopted.

A word as to Mr. Shepard's personality—This was very marked, not solely in his love of mental oral liberty rising at times into a passionate declaration, but in his ways of stating and illustrating his topics. The ready use of some common experience afforded a pithy story; the quick use of an apothegm; a pertinent quotation; the issuing forth of a humorous or sarcastic phrase made the interlocutor recall the well known conversational traits of Benjamin Franklin. In disputation ever willing, in fact pleased, "to give and take," in the verbal contest of opinions. Although in conversation sometimes using forcible language, he was quick to see the reddening skin—the spot where the blow fell—and by a marvelous indirectness of an apology wherein the humors of his body (the moisture of his lips and eyes) seemed to ally themselves with the genial temper of his disposition—he instantly salved the hurt and soothed the pain. This perennial kindness of manner in company with

his other humane traits has won for him the title of a LOVABLE MAN. Such a man, whether met upon the street or at a reunion, or visited within the home would not fail to be a welcome companion, comrade, or guest.

And it is this man endowed with so admirable characteristics whom the Vineland Historical and Antiquarian Society may well feel a pride in being allowed to call its most prominent benefactor and promoter.

In conclusion of this brief and imperfectly expressed tribute I may exclaim—If all true success—all useful honors and prosperity—must have had their source in the fountain itself at the very spot of spontaneous flow of motive and purpose through a wise distribution of its waters; then, this educational institution may justly and hopefully look forward to a future of usefulness and honor by the contribution of John S. Shepard.

Resolutions of Respect.

WHEREAS, there has been removed from among us JOHN S. SHEPARD, an honorary member of the Vineland Historical and Antiquarian Society.

RESOLVED, That in the close of the earthly career of our honored member we lose a steadfast friend whose assistance and help in the upbuilding of this Society has been marked by an earnest desire to benefit humanity.

RESOLVED, That we share with the community the loss of an estimable citizen whose life is a noble record of philanthropy, kindness and sympathy, modestly expressing by act and deed his love for mankind.

RESOLVED, That we unite with sympathizing friends in paying respect to the memory of our departed brother whose conscientious regard for goodness, truth and justice ever characterized his life.

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be furnished his bereaved widow, and be placed upon the records of the Society.

FRANK D. ANDREWS, Secretary.

By the Death Bed of John S. Shepard.

Composed and Read by R. A. Williams.

Our old friend nears the gates of death,
His breath comes faint and slow,
The pilgrimage is well nigh done,
Commenced long years ago.

He knows no present, heeds no past,
The future holds no fears,
Fold his thin hands above his breast,
Why should he linger here?

His life well spent leaves no regret,
The world fades from his view;
He wrought the work which came to hand
The best his nature knew.

A truer knowledge of his God,
Will flood the new born soul;
The unfinished purpose of his life
Becomes a perfect whole.

Mayhap his thoughts go wandering back
To manhood's early days;
Roaming his many-acred farm
Where sheep and cattle graze.

No longer bowed by weight of years,
But filled with youthful fire,
Patiently facing duty's call,
As daily needs require.

3 1833 02324 191 9

Again he tends the village school,
Or, midst his flock and herds,
With nature he doth hold commune
And heed her speechless words.

Much did he ponder on her laws,
Her teaching formed his creed;
His faith—"The Brotherhood of Man,"
And help in time of need.

All cruelty his soul abhorred,
No fraud could he condone;
For right he'd stand against the world
Although he stood alone.

And all the poor knew where to turn
When in distressful strait;
He never turned away unhelped
The needy from his gate.

A guileless man, yet shrewd withal,
Of sterling common sense,
His life toward humanity
Was void of all offense.

He gained—he lost—yet Fortune's smile
Was with him all his days;
The fond companion of his toil
Filled all his life with praise.

So lived John Shepard, so he dies,
What hath he to atone?
"He's gone!" his heart hath ceased to beat,
God hath recalled his own.

Address of Edwin C. Bidwell, M. D.

It has seemed to me not inappropriate to the present occasion to review briefly the connection of our deceased friend with the place where we are now assembled to honor his memory. To him chiefly and especially are we indebted for this suitable and convenient building, and for the site upon which it stands.

The Historical and Antiquarian Society of Vineland was originally organized early in the history of the place.

It made some progress for a few years under the presidency of Dr. John Ingram and with Mr. C. B. Campbell as secretary. Mr. Campbell was a zealous Antiquarian and made sacrifices as well as labored for its promotion. After his death for a season no practical progress was accomplished.

In 1893 at a meeting of the membership for the revival and reorganization of the Society Mr. Shepard was present and offered to contribute five hundred dollars, conditionally toward a suitable building. Mr. D. F. Morrill, the President, agreed to donate a building then standing in his grounds, and already occupied by the property of the society, which would serve for a time at least for the storage and protection of its books and other treasures.

For the removal of the building, the Organization being then absolutely destitute financially, Mr. Shepard offered an unconditional gift of one hundred dollars to meet this and other immediate expenses. This was afterward returned to him with a change of arrangement. The town lot owned by the Society, the gift of Mr. Landis many years before, seemed to the directors, for many reasons, an

altogether unsatisfactory location. A more eligible one being offered for six hundred and fifty dollars, Mr. Shepard, quite as much dissatisfied with the original location as even the directors, increased his donation to that amount; and with it bought and presented the Association the lot upon which this building now stands. The building having been already moved to our former lot, was again moved and established here. Thus it was that Mrs. Parkhurst's former studio became the property and home of this Association and now constitutes one-fourth of this present structure.

That was all very well for a beginning, but our indefatigable secretary, Mr. Andrews, soon found his space all too limited and asked the trustees to build an extension on the west of about the same size to double the capacity. Mr. Shepard appreciating the need of more space offered to pay one-half the cost of the addition, which he did. In two or three years the insatiable secretary again demanded more room, and again, Mr. Shepard came promptly to his relief, with the moiety of the sum required, and thus was built this southside addition, where we now sit, again doubling floor-space and shelving.

When at the Annual Meeting, October 12th, 1897, the building committee (which was the Secretary) reported the work done and paid for, except some small balance for material, Mr. Shepard was on hand with a check for fifty dollars. With this, his total contribution to this institution reached one thousand dollars.

We hear in these later years not unfrequently of some son of New England who having gone abroad in search of fortune, and having succeeded in the search and capture of that fickle jade, has affectionately remembered the ancient town of his birth, and his boyhood, and of his fathers, and at the cost of many thousands of dollars has built and endowed a library there, which should be not only a new centre of culture, but a joy and a pride to the old town. Compared to such a gift one thousand dollars makes but a

small show. But Mr. Shepard was not a highly successful merchant of Chicago, nor a Philadelphia street railway king, nor a gold miner from Cripple Creek, nor a stockholder of Standard Oil, or Sugar or any other trust, but a plain hard-working farmer on the cold and stony hills of Vermont. To him a thousand dollars was no small thing, and when we see what it has done for this institution in the time of its need, we must admit that to us it was a big thing. This safe, secure and permanent home for the Historical and Antiquarian Society of Vineland is largely his work and in a sense his monument. The latest addition has been named for him, "The Shepard Lecture Room."

In the seventies, something over twenty years ago, an attempt was made to establish a free public library here. It started off with some considerable show of success. Each succeeding year its supporters became fewer in number and their contributions smaller, till the unavoidable expenses for rent, attendance and incidentals, became too heavy a load for the few, who, by becoming trustees, made themselves responsible for them. The inevitable result followed, the scheme had to be chronicled a failure. The present writer had taken an active part in the organization and in the subsequent management of that experiment, wherefore in addition to the feeling of disappointment at the non-success of an institution from which much was hoped of good to the community, there was to him also a humiliating sense of personal failure. It was therefore a pleasant surprise to him to hear Mr. Shepard declare, on the occasion of the meeting above mentioned, that his experience, observations and reflections, in connection with that library, had so impressed him with a sense of the value and importance of free public libraries, as to lead him to make the offer which he was now making. There were then present two or three others who, situated much like myself in the matter, were doubtless pleased and comforted to hear thus proclaimed the intimate relation between the failure of twenty years ago and the success of to-day.

While I have thought this matter worthy of note, I suspect that it is exceptional only in the fact that the linking together of the two events is made so clearly to appear. Probably no honest earnest effort for a really good cause—though it fail as our library did of its immediate purpose—is yet ever wholly lost. Let us comfort ourselves with the belief that in every such case influences for good start out, mostly unrecorded, unperceived even, yet existing, living, growing, somewhere and sometime to blossom and bear fruit. A good deed takes hold on Eternity.

One of the lessons which I think we all learned from our unfortunate experience in the seventies was the prime necessity, for an institution of that kind, of a place of its own, when in the contingency of diminished income it would still find at least storage without expense. Then under discouraging conditions it might calmly wait for a change, assured that whatever of value it had gained should not be dispersed or destroyed to meet a demand for rent. I think that was Mr. Shepard's view, and I doubt if his first offer would have been made but for the knowledge that such a place to be wholly our own was in immediate and certain prospect.

This institution is not the only beneficiary of Mr. Shepard's liberality. The Children's Aid Society, and perhaps some others of a public or semi-public character have been assisted by him. But for the most part his benevolence seemed to run in the direction of private charity. We have reason to believe that his private benefactions were numerous and judicious. We cannot well lift the veil which he has let drop before each and all of them. We have therefore no data for computations.

I cannot refrain from the mention of one peculiar and characteristic charity. That was the purchase of several wheel-chairs for the sole purpose of lending them to the invalids and crippled persons of his neighborhood.

Address of J. Wilde.

This is a wonderful age, the arts and sciences are not only marching on in gigantic strides, but humanitarianism is foremost in the race. There never was a period in the world's history when there were better men, and better women; nobler, truer and braver than there are to-day: thousands if not millions put the memorable Sermon on the Mount in the shade: they not only do unto others as they would have others do unto them, but do a great deal better. They not only feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit those who are sick and in prison, but are forming humanitarian organizations all over the civilized world to prevent them from being hungry, naked, or in prison; to make null and void the language of the poet who said "Man's inhumanity to man has made countless millions mourn." Co-operation is the watchword of the hour, to co-operate with the Divine ruler of the universe, to bring Man under Divine law and Divine requirement which would eliminate misery, wretchedness and woe from the world.

Our ascended brother can be classed with these, and such as these, who believe that if you love not your brother whom you have seen, and give him a brother's sympathy, and a brother's aid, they can not love God whom they have not seen; that "pure and undefiled religion is to visit the fatherless and the widow in their affliction, and keep yourself unspotted from the world." When Confucius, the great philosopher, teacher and moralist, was conversing with one of his countrymen who was alarmed on account of the corruption of his age and nation, fearing but few would reach heaven, Confucius said, let us bring heaven

down to earth, or establish the kingdom on earth. That was the mission of our worthy brother. He not only bore his share of burden resting upon the human family, but of others less fortunate than himself, and with his life companion, visited the poor, sick and sorrowing, ministering to their wants and necessities, bringing joy and gladness to many households enveloped in darkness and despair. Judging from his acts he believed in justice, righteousness and benevolence.

As I stood by the open grave these thoughts ran through my mind: Farewell, friend of humanity, we leave thy casket here in this sequestered spot, where storms, tempests and cyclones can not disturb its quiet repose, and when spring time comes, with its green grass, its budding roses, and blooming flowers, it will rest in peace amid the songs of birds and the humming of insects, and fairer hands than mine will plant the rose and tulip on the rising mound.

Letter from Mr. Harry Wilson.

VINELAND, N. J., Feb. 3, '99.

FRANK D. ANDREWS, ESQ.

DEAR SIR: Your kind favor of yesterday eve duly to hand. Thanks for your kind invitation to meet with your Society on next Wednesday. Much as I should like to be present on such an occasion I fear I shall be denied the pleasure. I am now confined to my house and cannot count on when I shall be able to get out. Nothing would give me more pleasure than to express my feelings in relation to my dear old Comrade and Friend, John S. Shepard. I knew him—not merely his name and person—but as a man to be remembered, his heart, his worth, his honor. His departing leaves a void that I can not easily replace. Peace to his ashes. May his faults—if any—be written upon the sand, his virtues upon tablets of love and memory.

Yours Truly,

HARRY WILSON.

Letter from Prof. Marcius Willson.

VINELAND, N. J., Feb. 7th, 1899.

MR. FRANK D. ANDREWS, Sec'y.

DEAR SIR: I have received your kind invitation to be present at the services on Wednesday, the 8th, commemorative of our late worthy associate, Mr. John S. Shepard, and I regret exceedingly that I see no prospect of being

able to be present on that interesting occasion, for *La Grippe*, which has held me in durance vile these three weeks, will not yet allow me my full personal freedom.

I had but little personal acquaintance with Mr. Shepard until within about a year past, when frequent pleasant conversations with him enabled me to form the opinion that, in his modest, undemonstrative way, he was one of the worthiest characters that I have ever known. He impressed me as a man of benevolent feelings, full of kindness; intelligent, liberal, and charitable in all his views; and, within the influence which he could exert, desirous of being good and doing good to all. I found he had studied the principles of moral duties and moral obligations; and unless I am much mistaken I may truly say of him that, like Abou Ben Adhem, "he loved his fellow men," and with an intelligent justness that gave the charities within his range the widest means for good.

As we regard Mr. Shepard as almost the founder, and certainly an unwavering financial supporter, of the Vineland Historical and Antiquarian Society, we are glad to set apart this day in which to recall his virtues, and pay a deserved tribute to his memory.

MARCIUS WILLSON.

Remarks of H. C. Bartlett.

Herbert C. Bartlett in a brief address spoke of his acquaintance with Mr. Shepard and considered him a friend to the poor, the champion of the oppressed and his religion that embodied in the golden rule.

Address of Rev. R. B. Moore, D. D.

Rev. R. B. Moore said:

I had not expected to speak upon this occasion, but I am glad to add my testimony to what has been said of the character of Mr. Shepard. I have not known him so well as others have, but have seen enough of him to be impressed with his kind-heartedness, and his desire for the good and the prosperity of humanity.

In what he has done for this Historical Society, and in his words spoken he has shown that he has a liberal mind, and greatly desired to help forward the cause of intelligence and morality among men.

He has impressed me as one whose disposition was kindly toward all men; and not only toward men, but toward the lower animal creation. I have never been in Mr. Shepard's home, but I feel sure that his horse, his cow, his dog or his cat could never have received at his hand aught but the kindest of treatment. My meetings with him have been mostly at the Post Office, or on the street, and upon one occasion, about a year ago, he inquired how the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was getting along. Upon my answer—although I did not even suggest the idea of help from him—he said he was interested in the Society's work and must give it some aid. Shortly afterwards he sent us ten dollars for this purpose. When we see the cruelty to which many poor animals are exposed, we are glad to meet such men, and we wish there were more of them.

John Starling Shepard.

An Acrostic composed and read by THOMAS B. STREET.

Join now with me, dear neighbors, friends, to serious view.
Our worthy brother's aged form his earthly journey's through.
His modesty and quiet mien fore'er evaded eulogy,
Nor can our words in fittest form declare this noble prodigy.

Steadfast for truth and right he ever faithful firmly stood;
Tho' ignorance might frown upon him he only sought for good,
And that to always strive to do in his own quiet way.
Rich his reward should ever be, each well-known friend will say.
Let the afflicted needy ones declare as best they truly can,
In words befitting ever praise the nobly glorious worthy man.
Now that he has passed beyond our fleeting mundane sphere,
Glorious his recompense should be in bright over there.

Shall I pause here? Ah, no, I must my honest thoughts pursue.
How shall I best declare in words his own peculiar view.
Ever with mild sarcastic speech with kindly feelings well applied
Profound contempt on hypocrites whose faith dishonest works denied,
And hated forms and man-made creeds, he ne'er with them allied.
Retaining charity for all, he was with pity always full,
Donating to the needy much; our words his worth can never tell.

Address of Rev. William M. Gilbert.

Rev. W. M. Gilbert said, in part:

As my thought of Mr. Shepard was freely expressed at his funeral service, I need add but a few concluding words at present.

Mr. Shepard was a good example of a successful mân in private life. Some of his attainments were, the personal integrity of loyalty to the best he saw, the ardent love of those who knew him best, the profound respect of the community, the long life of 89 years, and a pecuniary competence which he earned by useful labor and saved by wise economy, and which rendered him, not only comfortable during his declining years, but also able to gratify his strong desire to help others.

In achieving his success, experience was his chief teacher. It was his mental habit to give close attention to what his own experience affirmed, and then, by observation and reading, to learn how much of his individual experience was confirmed by the common experience of mankind. He thus obtained his safe and helpful rules of faith and practice by making the best use of his own facts. He loved intellectual and moral certainties rather than the speculative thought which vainly tries to answer questions that have puzzled the human mind during all periods of history.

This habit was illustrated by the virtues which he exemplified, such as kindness, justice, veracity, prudence, fortitude, temperance and tolerance. Universal human experience affirms that these are good and that their opposites are harmful. The laws involved in such virtues are

moral certainties, and that element of certainty was essential to Mr. Shepard's mental constitution.

This habit was also illustrated by what he desired to have propagated by education. Growing experience made him increasingly eager to have all people study history, the laws of heredity, the value of industry and economy, the excellence of thoroughness and such like. He wanted all to obtain an experimental knowledge of the laws and motives for right living, resulting from the mind's direct contact with the facts in self and in one's environment. His timely and generous gifts, to the Historical Society, form but one of the many expressions of his eagerness to propagate the certainties of experience.

His habit represents a needed trend in education toward a better qualification for the real work of life. Educators are seeing, with increasing clearness, that much that is called education only qualifies the student for fields of labor that are already painfully crowded and it disqualifies for the fields where trained workers are needed. Experience is impelling them to affirm, by word and deed, that systems of education must be changed so that young people will be better fitted for the real needs and opportunities of life. Education must be made more scientific in the sense of imparting a deeper realization of the value of what is positively known. What was it that converted the wilderness of 40 years ago into the Vineland of to-day? The true answer is found in the wide use of certain knowledge rather than in speculative thought. What is the secret of the goodness that is found in the best people of all creeds and parties? Surely not the great variety of their conflicting speculative opinions, but obviously their common perception of and obedience to the moral certainties which all experience declares to be beneficial. Mr. Shepard exemplified this conviction. He often reminded me of a poem by Washington Gladden, most of which he heartily approved.

In the bitter waves of woe,
Beaten and tossed about
By the sullen winds that blow
From the desolate shores of doubt,—

When the anchors that faith had cast
Are dragging in the gale,
I am quietly holding fast
To the things that cannot fail:

I know that right is right;
That it is not good to lie;
That love is better than spite,
And a neighbor than a spy;

I know that passion needs
The leash of a sober mind;
I know that generous deeds
Some sure reward will find;

That the rulers must obey;
That the givers shall increase;
That Duty lights the way
For the beautiful feet of Peace;—

In the darkest night of the year,
When the stars have all gone out,
That courage is better than fear,
That faith is truer than doubt;

And fierce though the fiends may fight,
And long though the angels hide,
I know that Truth and Right
Have the universe on their side;

And that somewhere, beyond the stars,
Is a Love that is better than fate;
When the night unlocks her bars
I shall see Him, and I will wait.

HECKMAN
BINDERY INC.
MAR 94
ound -To -Please N. MANCHESTER,
INDIANA 46962